



Australian Bureau of Statistics

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New figures on award and agreement coverage in Australia

Workers on award rates are paid an average of almost \$200 a week less than employees who are covered by individual or collective agreements according to figures released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

In May 2000, full-time adult award only employees had average weekly total earnings of about \$654. Employees paid by collective agreements (\$888) and individual agreements (\$852) received higher wages than award only employees.

Award only employees are those paid exactly the award rate of pay. Collective agreement employees are those paid by a certified or enterprise agreement. Individual agreement employees mainly include those whose pay is set by a common law contract and employees who receive overaward payments.

Employees paid exactly the award rate made up 24% of employees in Australia. Most employees had their pay set by individual agreements (41%) or collective agreements (35%).

Females and part-time employees were those most likely to be paid award wages. Some 31% of females were paid by awards only, compared with 17% of males. Males were more likely than females to have their pay set by an individual agreement, 47% compared with 34%. About 41% of part-time employees were paid by awards only, compared with 15% of full-time employees.

Registered collective agreements set the pay for the majority of public sector employees (78%), compared with 22% of the private sector. Almost half (48%) of all private sector employees were paid by unregistered individual agreements, with 27% covered by awards only and 22% paid according to registered collective agreements.

Registered individual agreements set the pay for a small proportion of employees, 1.5% in the private sector and 3.0% in the public sector.

Employees who work for large employers were much more likely to have their pay set by a collective agreement than those of smaller employers. Employees in smaller organisations were most likely to have their pay set by individual agreements. Award only employees were evenly spread across most employer sizes, but were less common in large employers.

The data released today is the first ever set of comprehensive statistics on award and agreement coverage released by the ABS.

Details are in **Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia, Preliminary, May 2000** (cat. no. 6305.0) which is available from the ABS Bookshop.

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